

## **PredPol Day-to-Day Use Guide**

PredPol is designed for day-to-day use. However, the planning cycle for using PredPol takes place over a longer time frame. There are three stages to PredPol mission planning:

- Setting Mission Priorities
- Generating & Distributing Daily Missions
- Periodic Review

### Setting Mission Priorities

Set your mission priorities every three or four months. These mission priorities determine your default settings for PredPol during the mission period:

- PredPol missions should focus on a narrow array of similar crime types.
- Resist the temptation to switch prediction priorities from day to day depending upon what crimes occurred over night.
- Set reasonable expectations about time officers should spend on PredPol missions.

For example, you may be having a persistent problem with burglary from motor vehicle (BTFV). Set up your PredPol predictions to work on BTFV and plan to run predictive missions on BTFV for the three or four month period. Other crimes (e.g., robbery) will attract your attention during this period. Work these other crimes according to your standard practice while keeping your BTFV mission in place. Any mission is a burden if it is all an officer is asked to do. Getting patrol officers to work their BTFV mission during some of their available time is a good place to start.

### Generate & Distribute Daily Missions

Since the focus of your PredPol missions will be the same over an extended period you can develop a quick daily routine for generating, distributing and briefing your officers about the daily mission. This process may involve several steps:

- Log in to your PredPol server using designated URL
- Generate mission reports at the beginning of the day or before each shift or watch.

- Discuss with your command team or analyst any connection between PredPol box locations and any ongoing crime events or intelligence you may have.
- Distribute the PredPol hot-sheet or full report at roll call.
- Present practical (not theoretical) goals for the day's PredPol mission. Here is some suggested briefing language that has worked well in the field:
  - **Clear statement of the task:** "Here are your burglary/theft from vehicle (BTFV) targets for the day".
  - **Clear statement of time on task:** "Get in the box during your available time. A few minutes each hour is ideal."
  - **Create links between some boxes (no need to discuss every box) and conditions on the ground:**
    - *Link to ongoing recent crime:* "We have a persistent BTFV problem near Walk St. and Don't Walk Ave."
    - *Link to criminal intelligence:* "Business owners we have talked to have noticed...in the vicinity of this target box."
    - *Link to recent arrests:* "We had an arrest last week in the vicinity of this target box."
    - *Solicit information from your officers who are working the street:* "What is driving the BTFV problem in the area around this target box?"
  - **Encourage practical activities in and around the boxes that are related to the mission crime type:**
    - Ask officers to produce Field Interview (FI) cards.
    - Ask officers to run car plates.
    - Ask officers to check for warrants.
    - Ask officers to speak to residents or business owners to solicit intelligence.
    - Ask officers to 'set up' in a prominent location for a few minutes.
- Turn to other briefing issues to show that PredPol is just one part of your broader strategy.



### Review PredPol Priorities

If you have a weekly crime review meeting then this provides an opportunity to take a closer look at where PredPol missions have been located and how these locations connect with crime patterns and criminal intelligence. Think of this meeting as an expanded version of the daily conversation about PredPol box locations and conditions on the ground.

Consider collecting information on officer activities in and around PredPol boxes as part of reviewing priorities. What are FI cards or run license plates telling you about the mission?

Only you can decide whether prediction priorities need to shift from one crime type to another. However, shifting too frequently creates a moving target for your officers.

## **Supervisor & Patrol FAQs**

### **1. What is a PredPol box?**

PredPol assigns probabilities to locations where crime is most likely to occur and designated the highest probability locations with distinctive red box. When you 'Get in the Box' you know you have entered a high-probability crime area.

### **2. Why doesn't the PredPol box tell me what type of crime is likely to occur there?**

PredPol predictions can put you in the right place at the right time, but they are not a replacement for your knowledge, skills and experience. You are most effective when you are using your problem solving abilities to deal with the causes of crime in each local situation.

### **3. Why are PredPol boxes so small?**

PredPol boxes are the right size to capture the locations that are at greatest risk of crime. Sometimes it's just one or two houses that are at risk, or a few parking spaces. Why include a whole neighborhood or whole street block when PredPol can make it much more precise for you?

### **4. If PredPol is a way of 'policing the probabilities' isn't this just the same thing as taking a gamble or playing a hunch?**

PredPol is not a guess or a hunch. Predictions are based on your hard data about where and when crimes have occurred. PredPol uses mathematical models to tell you where the most likely locations for crime to occur today.

### **5. How do I get my patrol officers motivated to 'Get in the Box'?**

Nobody knows your team better than you do, but there are some ways in which one can motivate PredPol missions:

- Encourage practical activities in the box such as collecting Field Interviews, running license plates, doing warrant checks, collecting street-level intelligence.
- PredPol is not arrest driven, but if you do get arrests 'in the box' let the officers 'tell their story' and encourage them to spread the word.



**6. Should all of our policing activities occur only 'in the box'?**

Each PredPol box represents a location with a high probability of crime. However, problem solving both 'in the box' and the surrounding area are expected to have an impact.

You can think of a PredPol box as an anchor-point for crime prevention activities.

**7. Does PredPol replace officer judgment & experience?**

Absolutely not! Officer judgment is critical to problem solving 'in the box'. PredPol will help the new officer to more quickly understand the nature of crime risk in their environment. It will help the veteran look at their policing environment in a new way. And, since PredPol predictions may change from day to day, getting 'in the box' may help officers avoid falling into routine patrol patterns.

**8. Is PredPol probable cause?**

PredPol is not probable cause. It is a precision way of defining 'high crime areas' based on your crime data. High crime areas may grounds for further investigation, but additional objective evidence always must accompany reasonable suspicion and probable cause.